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THE SCHOOL REVIEW

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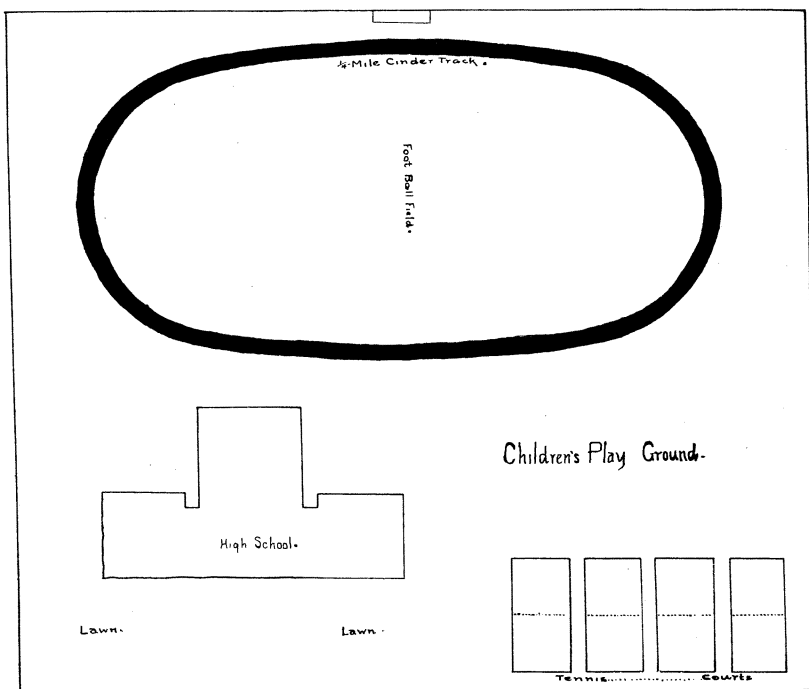
AN ILLUSTRATION OF THE MANAGEMENT OF ATHLETICS IN A HIGH SCHOOL.

ATHLETICS exist, and what is the school to do? It makes little difference whether we can agree that athletic sports are desirable; for in adolescence boys will have their games whether the school approves or not. They will organize teams and play match games, and the school cannot prevent them. A school superintendent making an argument against athletics said: "I have done all I can to prevent football, yet football is the ruination of my school." Unwittingly he had furnished the strongest argument for school direction. Opposition does not prevent athletics; it only renders athletics harmful. It is futile to discuss whether we want to direct athletics; we must do it, and the only practical question is: Just what ought the school to do?

Probably the most helpful answer I can give to this question is to act upon the suggestion of the editor of this paper and tell what the Wausau High School has done. If the conditions fall short of the ideal, they have the virtue of actually existing.

In the first place, the Wausau High School furnishes athletic facilities. The high-school grounds cover seven acres. On the rear portion of the grounds is a quarter-mile cinder running-track which was made by the boys under the direction of their coach; the board paid for the teams and the boys did the shoveling. Inside the track are a football gridiron and a baseball diamond; outside the track are four tennis courts and a playground for

smaller children. In front of the school is a well-kept lawn. If lawn or playground had to be sacrificed, the lawn would be the first to go, but with seven acres there is plenty of room for both. Pupils take a pride in a lawn when it does not encroach upon their right to exercise.

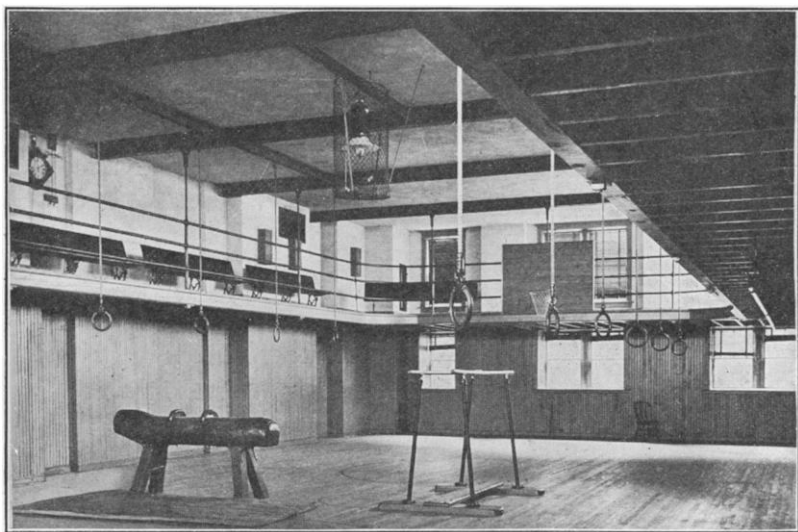


PLAN OF THE GROUNDS OF THE WAUSAU HIGH SCHOOL.

Inside the building is a gymnasium, $74' \times 35'$, fitted with a gallery running-track, basket-ball and indoor baseball paraphernalia, and a moderate amount of other apparatus, such as horse, bars, ladders, and rings. The main corridor furnishes a straight course for a thirty-five yard dash, and is used by the boys for sprints and hurdles after 5 o'clock. The shower-bath rooms are supplied with an unlimited quantity of hot and cold water. The gymnasium lockers back up against the furnaces, so that the clothing will be warmed and dried.

In the second place, the Wausau board of education always

aims to have at least one person in the high-school faculty who is thoroughly competent to assist the boys with their athletic work. Through this arrangement, although the school has not paid for athletic services and has had to depend upon the voluntary services of its teachers, all the teams of both sexes have been coached by competent athletes who have had at heart the best interests of the contestants and the school rather than the winning of trophies. Last year Mr. F. W. Schule taught science in



GYMNASIUM.

the high school and trained himself in the high-school gymnasium and on the high-school track for the A. A. U. meets. At the Milwaukee indoor meet he equaled a world's record, and at the Detroit outdoor meet he was the star, winning three gold and three silver medals. The boys had the privilege of training with him and profited much. Though the high-school team contained little material of promise, it won the Lawrence cup in competition with about twenty schools at Appleton.

In the third place, the school controls its athletics strictly in accordance with the rules of the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association. This association has a membership of about eighty schools, including all the most important ones of the

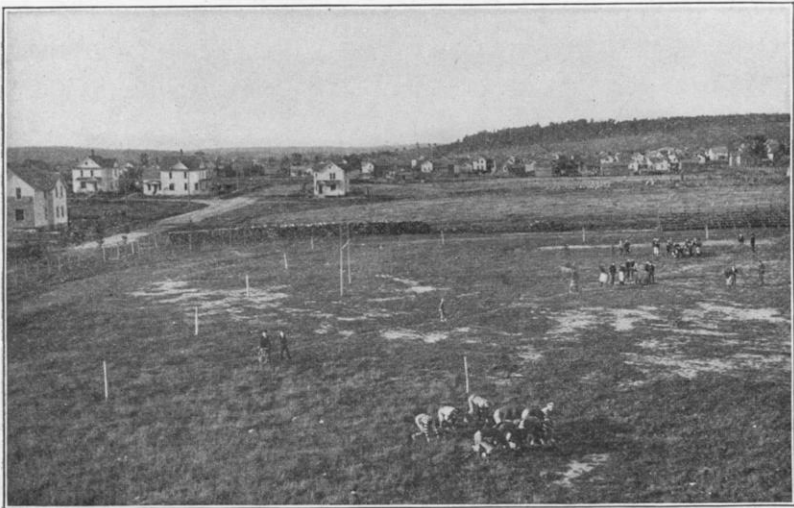
state. The annual business meeting of the association is held at the time of the meeting of the State Teachers' Association, and each school holding membership is entitled to one vote, which must be cast by its principal or his authorized representative. This meeting adopts rules, audits accounts, and elects a board of control of three members, who execute the rules and manage all affairs of the association for the ensuing year. One member is chosen each year for a term of three years, and the senior member is chairman. Membership in the association is limited to high schools of Wisconsin, and a member is bound to adhere to the rules in all interscholastic athletic contests, and to play no Wisconsin high school that is not a member unless permitted to do so by the board of control. The association holds an annual field meet at Madison the last Saturday in May, and this is the big interscholastic event of the year. The meet has always been successful; every contestant has been paid his car fare in full and given an allowance for other traveling expenses. Last year gold, silver, and bronze medals were also awarded the point winners.

A Wisconsin school desiring to take part in athletics is forced to be a member of the association and live up to its rules. For a violation of the rules in any athletic event a school is excluded from the Madison meet, and may be suspended for a year and prevented from playing with members in any line of athletics.

The principal of the high school is the only person recognized by the state rules; he is made manager of his teams, and is authorized to exclude any contestant from his teams whose conduct or character is unsatisfactory to him. The whole tenor of the rules is to make the authority of the principal supreme over the athletics of his school, and to discipline any school where the boys break away from the principal's control or where the principal fails to hold his school to the rules. The rules require a contestant to be a *bona fide* member of a public high school; he must be under twenty-one years of age, and must have obtained a passing average on full work (at least fifteen recitations per week) for the current term and also for his preceding term in school. This last provision is the most effective of all

—for it prevents a boy who drops school at the close of an athletic season from competing again until he shall have attended a full term with satisfactory record, and it prevents a boy from getting negligent about his work in the term in which he does not engage in athletics, as well as in the term in which he does.

At Wausau the high-school principal personally manages all teams, arranging games, signing contracts, and accompanying teams on their trips. The teams elect their own captains, but



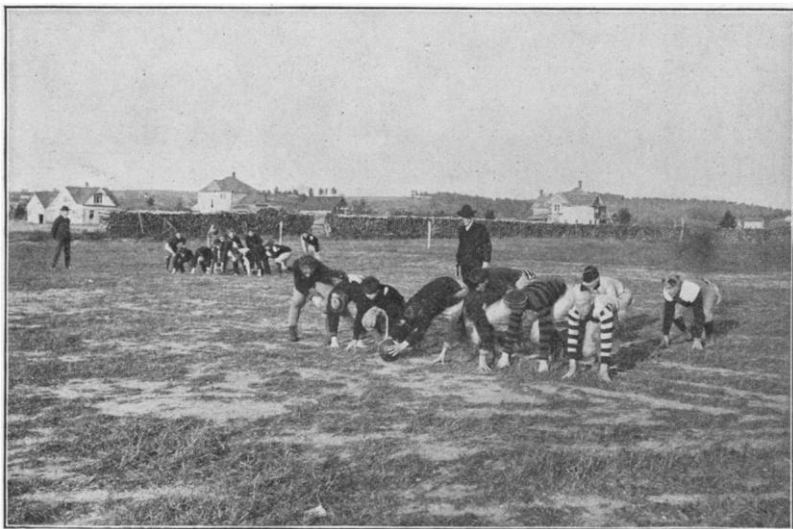
FROM THE ASSEMBLY HALL WINDOW.

contestants are picked and positions assigned by the high-school assistant who coaches the team. The boys are consulted on important matters and are made to realize that athletics are their activity; they must show their interest by doing everything in their power to organize and develop successful teams and to make the finances come out right. The school will then do all it can in a legitimate way to assist; the school will control athletics, but will always control in the spirit of fairness to every individual and in the interest of clean sport.

Athletic teams are maintained whether there is winning material or not; for athletics do not exist for the glorification of the school, nor does the school exist for the purpose of directing

athletics—both exist for the proper development of youth, and they should work harmoniously together for the same ends.

Two twenty-minute periods per week of gymnasium work are required of every pupil of the high school and eighth grade, excuses being granted only on doctor's certificate or because of membership in an athletic team. This work consists chiefly of Swedish movements that do not require a change of clothing. One girls' class, in which membership is elective, is allowed to



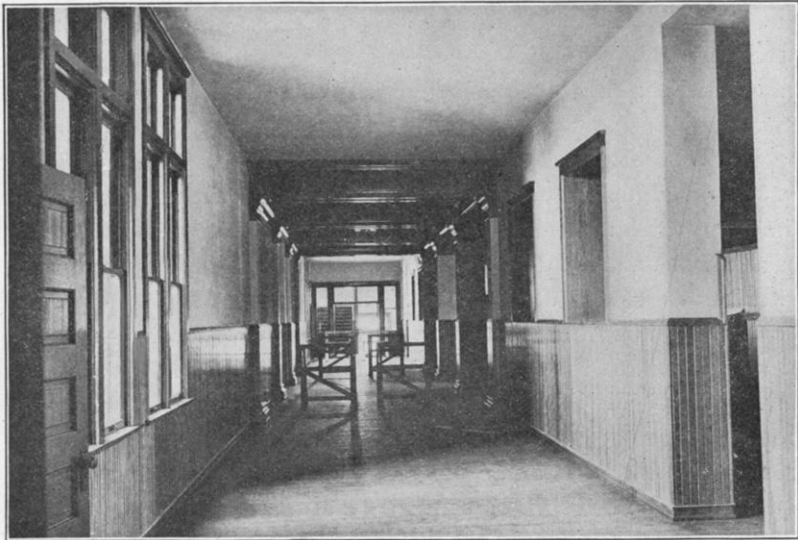
PORTION OF FOOTBALL FIELD.

put on gymnasium garb and use apparatus. The gymnasium classes are conducted during the school hours in the middle of the forenoon session and before the close of the afternoon session.

All other athletic work is voluntary. The gymnasium is open during the winter months from 4 to 6 o'clock on school days and on Saturday afternoons. A teacher is always in charge of the gymnasium when it is open; pupils turned loose to run riot in a gymnasium may get harm instead of good from their exercise.

The voluntary work naturally takes the direction of games. In the fall the boys play football and the girls play tennis. These sports end at Thanksgiving and basket-ball starts, the

gymnasium periods being divided equally between the sexes. All who desire to play are given a chance, and the result of the competition is the formation of four class teams of each sex. As these teams take final shape slowly, a considerable number of pupils are kept interested. Each team is given two forty-minute periods per week for practice. At the end of the first semester (about the first of February) class tournaments are held which



CORRIDOR SET WITH HURDLES.

are the principal athletic events of the winter. Each sex has one night, and a schedule of short games is played for class championship. Sometimes faculty teams of both sexes are formed from high-school and grade teachers and compete in the class tournaments. This adds to the interest of the tournament, and the faculty has suffered no loss of dignity by the competition. After the class tournaments, first teams of both sexes are formed which occasionally play outside games. But a first team tends to monopolize the gymnasium and is of questionable value. The girls at first played basket-ball under the same rules as the boys, but this proved too hard for some of the girls. So girls' rules were adopted, which divide the gymnasium floor into

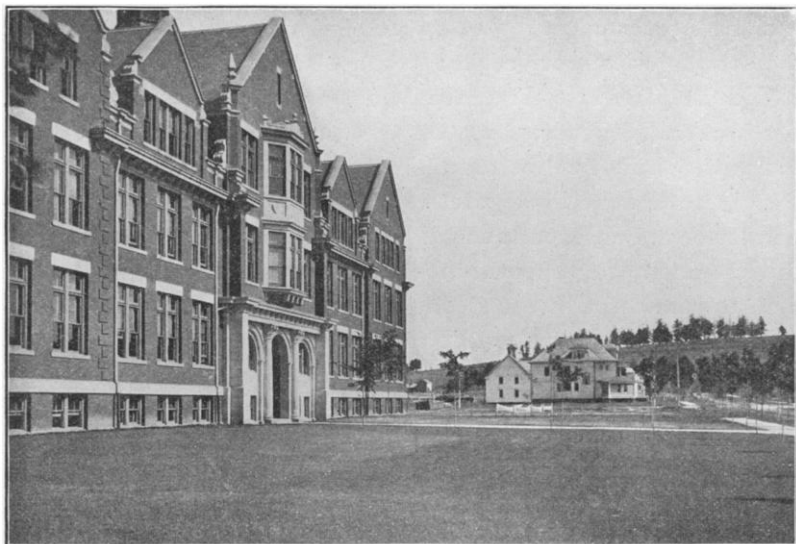
three sections, require each player to remain in her section, and prohibit snatching the ball from a player. At first the girls objected to the restrictions, but soon realized that under girls' rules team work was better, and the exercise was less severe and more beneficial. Teams of opposite sexes are never allowed to play together; and it has been found desirable, when one sex has the gymnasium for practice, to exclude the other sex; but the class tournaments and interscholastic contests of both sexes are public exhibitions. In the spring, boys turn to track athletics, training outdoors whenever possible and indoors in bad weather; the girls play tennis outside, and baseball in the gymnasium.

Boys' baseball teams were maintained for a few years; but it was found difficult to maintain track and ball teams at the same time, and the latter were abandoned. In Wisconsin high schools baseball has almost died out, while track athletics is of supreme interest in all parts of the state. Baseball is still played on the field in an unorganized way. Last year boys' basket-ball was also dropped, as the boys preferred to train in track work with Mr. Schule. Much benefit was received from this work, but a boys' basket-ball tournament will probably be held again this year. A military company was maintained during the Spanish war, while the boys' interest turned naturally to military affairs. The company was equipped with wooden guns made especially for the purpose by a local factory.

Before a pupil is allowed to compete in any interscholastic game he is required to file a written permit from his parents. This makes a better relation between the home and the school, and frequently, when a parent is asked by his child for a permit, he looks the matter up, and comes to see the value of athletics to his child, and his attitude will change from potential opposition to active support. In case of doubt as to a child's physical fitness for games, assurance from a physician is required; systematic physical examination of all pupils is desirable, but has appeared to be impractical in a public school.

The community has been well paid for its expenditure. It is always difficult in education to measure results of a course of

training of any kind, but some cases of physical development have been marked; for example, a boy apparently much below the average in physical endowments was so developed by two years of conscientious training that he performed the greatest feat of endurance ever done at the Wisconsin State Interscholastic Meet, winning within three hours the mile in 4:42 $\frac{2}{5}$, the half-mile in 2:06, and the first quarter of the mile relay. The same



LAWN WITH TENNIS COURTS IN DISTANCE.

summer at the National Interscholastic Meet at Buffalo he won the mile and took second in the five-mile, being beaten by an Indian.

But athletic work not only improves the body, it gives greater vigor to mental work. A sluggish mind is often aroused to a sense of mastery on the athletic field, and, finding it can excel on the gridiron, wakes up and does well in the class-room. The boys are made more manly. It is beneath the dignity of an athlete to tease a cat or play small tricks on the teacher. Pettishness is worked out; the mind is filled with nobler aspirations. The girls are made more robust and vigorous, and walk more gracefully, but lose nothing of the finer womanly qualities.

Gymnasium exercises render tight lacing impossible; no verbal precept is necessary.

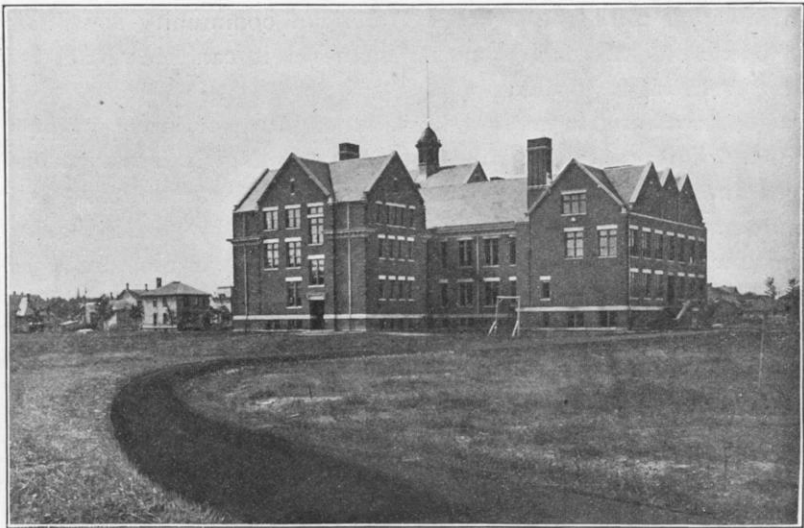
Some will ask: "How about accidents?" The Wausau High School has had more than its share of broken bones, but the boys all recovered fully and were the better for their training. The only cripple in the school received his injury while a spectator at a shinny game. An investigation by the board of control in 1902 as to injuries in Wisconsin high schools showed that the accidents received in football were less numerous and less severe than the injuries received in the unnoticed game of shinny.

Yet the danger to American boys is not in physical injury, but in moral degeneration. Arnica will cure bruises and broken bones will knit, but the drunkard will not forsake his ways nor the cigarette fiend his cigarettes. For a boy to be killed in football is so rare an occurrence as to be published from one end of the continent to the other, but for a boy to travel the beaten path to ruin through the saloon door is too common an occurrence to make a news item for a country weekly.

John and Will are two boys you all know. John plays football from 4 to 6, and goes home bruised and bloody. He rejects sympathy; all he wants is his supper and a chance to crawl off to bed. His mother says to herself: "This must stop! I will see the school board and the Humane Society!" She ought to be thankful that he is safe in bed for one night at least. Will plays pool from 4 to 6, and the animal energy within him is not spent. After supper he cannot study, he must do something. So he goes up-town, plays another game of pool, smokes a cigarette, swaps stories in front of a theater, and returns home, with his clothes in perfect order, his hair parted nicely in the middle—his mother's very ideal of manly beauty. But John is plodding the rugged road to sturdy manhood, and Will is headed down the swift road to destruction.

The high-school age is essentially the age of adolescence; and in adolescence, heredity appears as a factor of prime importance in a child's life. The sins of his fathers even unto the third and fourth generation appear in the boy and struggle for the mastery. The school cannot always talk frankly with the

parents on this subject. When a parent says, "I don't know what to do with my boy, he seems full of the very old Nick himself," the school can hardly respond: "It is even so; but you must be patient with Johnnie, for heredity is coming out strongly." But the school must not shut its eyes to this most important fact in the child's development; it must help the child to overpower evil hereditary tendencies and to strengthen inher-



THE CHILDREN'S CORNER.

ited virtues. The best way to cleanse the boy's mind and body is to give him plenty of vigorous exercise and follow it up with a bath. "But," someone says, "exercise is all right, but he ought to take it at home at the woodpile." While that highly useful form of exercise should by no means be discouraged, yet a game that calls forth alertness of mind, arouses enthusiastic interest, and gives food for healthful thought in leisure moments is a better mental tonic.

Because heredity makes athletic work so essential to the child in adolescence, it is proper that the largest portion of money for grounds and apparatus be given to the high school. But ample grounds should be provided for the unorganized play of grade

children. Of the six ward buildings at Wausau all but one have over an acre of playground, and the site for a new building covers six acres. The largest ward building is provided with gymnasium and hot and cold shower-baths.

"But the playgrounds cost money." Of course they cost money; everything good in education does; but when the schools by proper direction of the play of the pupils can demonstrate the real value of athletic work, the money will be forthcoming; for the average American community is willing to spend liberally for education whenever it can see that it is getting its money's worth.

Now, what is better worth an expenditure of money than a course of training that will make boys and girls into vigorous men and women, with plenty of physical courage and physical endurance for the labors of life? The world has little use for the anæmic philosopher; it wants men with that abundance of good spirits, hopefulness, and energy which comes with the perfection of physical condition. Athletics are worth all they cost; they should be encouraged; they must be controlled.

C. C. PARLIN.

WAUSAU, WIS.